

REMARKS

The Office Action has been reviewed and the Examiner's comments carefully considered. No claims are being amended, added, or canceled. Thus, claims 12-32 remain pending and are submitted for reconsideration.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being anticipated by Mitsubishi.

Claims 12-13, 16, and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese reference 11-242984 ("Mitsubishi"). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law. The present application is a continuation of U.S. Application No 09/446,307, filed on December 20, 1999, which was the National Stage of International Application No. PCT/JP98/02849, filed on May 21, 1999. According to the MPEP 1893.03(b): "An international application designating the United States shall have the effect, from its international filing date under Article 11 of the treaty, of a national application for patent regularly filed in the Patent and Trademark Office except as otherwise provided in section 102(e) of this title." Because this application claims priority to the PCT international application, the effective filing date of the present application is also May 21, 1999. Mitsubishi is a Japanese reference published on September 7, 1999, which is over three months later than the effective filing date of the present application. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claims 12-13, 16, and 29 are allowable for at least this reason.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi.

Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi in view of Japanese reference 59-219886 ("Yasuda"). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law, as described above. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claim 14 is allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 17-23 and 29-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi in view of Japanese reference 09-007955 ("Sotodani"). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law, as described above. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claims 17-23 and 29-30 are allowable for at least this reason.

Claim 15 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi in view of U.S. Patent 3,817,735 ("Jones"). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the

reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law, as described above. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claim 15 is allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 24-25 and 31 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi in view of U.S. Patent 6,143,238 (“Konishi”). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law, as described above. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claims 24-25 and 31 are allowable for at least this reason.

Claims 26-28 and 32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Mitsubishi in view of U.S. Patent 4,950,443 (“Kawakubo”). The rejection should be withdrawn for at least the reason that Mitsubishi is not prior art under U.S. patent law, as described above. Because Mitsubishi is not prior art, claims 26-28 and 32 are allowable for at least this reason.

Conclusion

The present application is now believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check or credit card payment form being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Michelle D. Kaminski

By Reg. No. 32,904,600

Date June 13, 2006
FOLEY & LARDNER LLP
Customer Number: 22428
Telephone: (202) 672-5571
Facsimile: (202) 672-5399

Harold C. Wegner
Attorney for Applicant
Registration No. 25,258